

Academic Year: (2019 / 2020)

Review date: 25-03-2019

Department assigned to the subject: Humanities: History, Geography and Art Department

Coordinating teacher:

Type: Compulsory ECTS Credits : 6.0

Year : 4 Semester : 1

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS: PROGRAMME

This course deals with the phenomenon of religion as a construct permanent interaction with the remaining cultural production. It is a very effective tool that elaborates intellectual constructions (stories of various kinds, including myths) designed to provide answers to the concerns arising from conscious existence. A universe of beliefs that gives meaning to a community that relates individually and in groups with supernatural beings through formalized actions, rituals. Beliefs and rituals are precise tools for the construction of identities. Identity, as a sense of belonging, constitutes a framework of protection for the individual who feels that he or she is part of a group. Religion is at the epicentre of all intercommunity conflicts, as it is the core of the ideological superstructure that supports the socio-economic and political structures that determine relations with other communities. Under these conditions it is easy to attribute responsibility for conflicts to religion, which reduces and simplifies the analysis. The interaction between religion and culture is therefore the focus of this subject.

CONTENTS:

- 1.- The Anthropology and the origins of religious thought: abstraction, language, representation. Reality data and current projections of the past.
- 2.- The ideological supports of the first states: religion and cultural production. Rites of passage, popular cults. Theocracy and sacrilege; the identification of the status quo with the divine will. The supposed ideological-religious opposition of the Indo-European and Semitic worlds: integration or extermination of the other gods. The origin of a secular conflict or aetiological falsification.
- 3.- The polytheistic dimension of Greek culture. The polis and their locative gods: mythopoesis, epicleris and identities. Military coalitions and Panhellenic gods. Polis religion vs lived religion.
- 4.- The theory of the Axial Age: Lao Tse, Confucius and the philosophers of the Fighting Kingdoms; Hinduism, Brahmins and Gautama Buddha; Zoroaster and Mazdeism; prophetic Judaism; Greek philosophy of the pre-Socrats to Sophisticate. Variations on the concept of self-control or sophrosyne.
- 5.- Universal gods for global empires. The great religious and cultural transformation of the Hellenistic world into the Roman Empire. The triumph of monotheism. Dialectic innovation-fundamentalism in Judaism. Jesus of Nazareth and the Pauline invention of a new religion. Christianity and classical philosophy: Christian Stoicism.
- 6.- Political and religious conflicts: the definition of dogma and the new cultural order. The conflict between religious practice and theological production: a Mediterranean Christianized by a polytheistic monotheism. The perpetuation of Christianity beyond the "fall of the Roman Empire": political and cultural keys to a supposedly religious phenomenon. The identity of political power with a lineage, a creed and a territory. The success of Gothism.
- 7.- Cultural foundations of Islamic monotheism. Religious imperialism and the cultural renewal of the Mediterranean. Holy Land as a paradigm of a religious conflict sustained over time.
- 8.- Reform and counter-reform. Ethical-religious agents to explain a broken Europe: ideology at the forefront of change? Socio-economic dynamics and ideological change. A multi-religious Europe on the fringe of a multicultural Mediterranean. The Christian bases of Europe as opposed to polyhedral Romanity: What are we talking about when we talk about religious conflicts?

9.- Squat, stools and crossed legs. Millet, wheat, rice and corn. Production, consumption and religion. Territorial, ethnic and cultural identities. Juxtaposition, interference, conflict. Social breakdown, political disaffection, identity conflicts: retraction of old religious institutions, preachers, new religions. Global politics, regional imbalances, inequality, conscience, conflict, armed struggle, terrorism. The excuse of religion. The conflict between science and religion. A diachronic perception of the problem and its anthropological approach.

% end-of-term-examination:	60
% of continuous assessment (assignments, laboratory, practicals...):	40